

Meeting Summary
Long Island Sound Study Citizens Advisory Committee
Wednesday, June 13, 2001
Holly House Community Center for Environmental Education
Stamford, Connecticut

The meeting was called to order at 10:16 AM by Connecticut co-chair John Atkin. CAC Secretary Caroline DuBois called the roll; after several late arrivals, it was determined that 18 members were present. Atkin introduced Bill Boysen, Executive Director of SoundWaters, who welcomed the CAC to Holly House, and gave a brief overview of their new facility. After self-introductions of attendees (see Attachment 1) Atkin proceeded to the following agenda items:

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

David Miller referred the membership to the summary of the management committee meeting that had been mailed to the CAC on May 17, and briefly recapped the April 19, 2001 meeting as follows. The co-chairs received responses from both states to the CAC's March 22, 2001 letter to the commissioners regarding storm water program exemptions. The letters appeared to have addressed the CAC's concerns. Copies of the letters will be included with the meeting minutes (see Attachments 2 & 3). Miller reported that CTDEP has agreed to take the lead on identifying potential locations for the upcoming signing ceremony for the 2001 Long Island Sound Agreement, which is currently scheduled for Friday, September 28, 2001. Mark Tedesco will present more information on the 2001 LIS Agreement later in the meeting. Miller reported that the co-chairs strongly advocated for continuing the LIS research fund with a focus on living marine resources, and presented the LMR subcommittee's request for management committee support for and comments on their newly developed mission statement. The committee approved the FY2001 work plan and budget, which included a research fund of \$350,000. To date the LISO has not received any comments on the LMR mission statement, but LMR issues is a proposed topic on the July management committee meeting agenda. Mark Tedesco advised the members that the final National Estuary Program (NEP) funding guidance restored the full \$300,000 base NEP funds to the LISS. The management committee had drafted and sent a letter of objection on the proposed cut to the EPA Office of Water on April 19, 2001. The draft NEP guidance had allocated only an additional \$10,000 for national travel. The final FY2001 LISS budget allocation is \$5,319,700. [NB: This figure includes a .022% mandatory rescission of funds affecting the \$4.5 million FY2001 Congressional earmark, for a reduction of \$10,300 from the enacted level in FY2001.]

EPA Environmental Merit Award – Mark Tedesco announced that the CAC had been awarded the EPA New England Region's Environmental Merit Award for its work on behalf of the LISS. The award was presented to the co-chairs on behalf of the CAC at the April 19 management committee meeting. [NB: Rep. Chris Shays sent a letter of congratulations to the co-chairs on the award (see Attachment 4)]

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership Subcommittee – John Atkin reported that the CAC currently has 36 members

on-board -- 23 from New York and 13 from Connecticut. There are a number of members who have not attended at least 2 meetings over the last year, and the committee is preparing to send a letter to these members regarding their membership status. There were several resignations and re-designations of members; Atkin advised the members that there were two new membership applications -- Judy Preston of the Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency and Eve Kaplan of the North Fork Environmental Council. The membership committee recommended both applications to the membership for referral to the management committee, and Atkin called for a vote to so refer these names. Dan Natchez objected to the vote, stating that CAC rules require such matters to be presented to the membership 30 days prior to a meeting at which voting was to take place. Joe Salata explained that Article VI of the CAC By Laws did not preclude conduct of routine business, and the provision was meant to facilitate adoption of official CAC positions on issues by providing proposed resolutions to the LISO at least 45 days prior to the meeting at which voting was to take place. This provision allows the LISO sufficient time to process such resolutions for presentation to the membership 30 days prior to a meeting at which voting is to take place. After further discussion of interpretation of the rules, David Miller recommended that, since a copy of the rules was not on hand, this matter be put on the September agenda for discussion. Miller requested that a copy of Article VI be included in the meeting minutes (See Attachment 5). Atkin then called for a vote on the new members by asking for "ayes" and "nays;" the "ayes" were in the majority and the new members were approved by voice vote of the members present. The new list of CAC members will be referred to the management committee as provided for in the By Laws (see Attachment 6). Dan Natchez stated that while he had no objection to the new members themselves, he renewed his objection to the vote.

Communications Subcommittee -- Chair Steve Matthews was unable to attend the meeting; Caroline DuBois referred the members to the written report in the meeting package. DuBois reported that Matthews was very pleased with the *Sound Health 2001* report. Mark Tedesco indicated that 60 PowerPoint slides had just been completed that provide additional indicators, and this will be posted on the LISS website in the next few weeks.

Tracking & Monitoring Subcommittee -- Chair David Miller reported that the 2000 CCMP Implementation Tracking Report was not yet available. The final report should be available in June, and will be used as a basis for preparing the CAC's 2002 priorities. As the subcommittee meeting notes were not provided in the meeting package, they are included with these minutes (see Attachment 7). Based on the report's overviews, which had been provided to the subcommittee members, Miller reported the initial priorities that subcommittee members recommended: 1) TMDL process and implementation; 2) habitat restoration program; 3) living marine research; and 4) LIS reserve program. It was suggested that sediments be added to the list. Miller indicated that the CAC would review these priorities upon reading the final report at the September meeting. Joe Salata provided a brief overview of the principal findings of the 2000 CCMP Implementation Tracking Report (see Attachment 8), including the extent and duration of hypoxic conditions; point and

nonpoint source nitrogen loading trends; progress on habitat restoration goals, and annual LISS website hits. Mark Parker reported that CTDEP's most recent data on *chlorophyll a* shows a large spike in 2001. CTDEP is considering this unusual spike in the trend data and its possible relationship to nitrogen levels in the Sound. Joel Ziev asked whether the dissolved oxygen maps provided by CTDEP of the open Sound monitoring could include information on embayments from the volunteer water quality monitoring groups. LISO will look into the feasibility of this type of mapping with CTDEP and Carol DiPaolo.

Watershed Subcommittee -- Chair Caroline DuBois referred the CAC to the written report in the meeting package for details on the subcommittee's meeting.

Sediment Focus Group -- Chair Allen Berrien queried whether it might be appropriate to once again send a letter to the EPA Regional Administrators (RAs) concerning the sediment cost paper. Chair David Miller stated that since the new EPA RAs have not yet been appointed, it would be better to wait until they are appointed, and he again mentioned a national approach to this issue might be more effective. At the last meeting, Mark Tedesco had suggested that this issue was larger than any one or two states, and that it would be appropriate to raise this concern in the national arena through Association of National Estuary Programs (ANEP) at their March 11-15 meeting in Washington, DC. Tedesco had discussed this issue at the meeting with ANEP Chair Nancy McKay, and they had agreed to convene a small working group of NEP directors to scope out other issues that may be of national import. McKay is organizing a conference call to kick off this process. Miller said he would keep the CAC informed. Berrien reported that the Army Corps of Engineers had run out of funds to continue the environmental impact statement process for dredged material disposal site designation; the reasons are not clear, whether it is a lack of appropriations or internal ACOE budget priorities. The focus group had recommended that letters be sent to appropriators on this matter. Berrien reported that as chair of the focus group he had sent letters to a list of contacts provided by Ann Rodney. David Miller recommended that, until the CAC has a clear understanding of why funds are not available, it not send letters to appropriators. Grant Westerson indicated that Commissioner Rocque had sent a letter to EPA and the ACOE expressing concern over this issue. (See Attachment 11)

Living Marine Resources Subcommittee -- Chair Jennifer Wilson-Pines reported that the subcommittee had agreed on several target species on which to focus subcommittee efforts. Wilson-Pines thanked Mark Parker of CTDEP for volunteering to take the minutes of the subcommittee meeting; as the minutes were not included in the meeting package prior to the meeting, they will be included with the meeting minutes (see Attachment 9). Wilson-Pines stated that there is funding for LIS research in 2001 and that the research Request for Proposals (RFP) would be going out soon for projects -- several LMR subcommittee members who are not considering submitting a proposal have offered to assist in the review of the RFP. Mark Tedesco reported that the Long Island Sound Foundation is in the process of developing a comprehensive database of LIS research projects, which may complement the LMR subcommittee's task to catalogue all LIS research projects; if so, this project would

avoid potential duplication of effort.

CAC STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The co-chairs proposed that the December CAC meeting be used as a planning meeting to chart the strategic direction of the CAC over the next 4-5 years. This type of planning meeting has not been held in a number of years. The meeting would be led by an outside facilitator, who would handle the meeting processes and manage the group to achieve desired results. The December meeting is currently scheduled for the Donald F. Jones Auditorium at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station in New Haven. The proposal to hold a facilitated strategic planning session in December was well-received by the members, and the co-chairs agreed to proceed with planning for this session accordingly.

DRAFT LIS 2001 AGREEMENT

Mark Tedesco reported that the management committee moved up the date for the signing of the 2001 LIS Agreement to Friday, September 28, 2001; as the 1996 signing ceremony was held in New York, the committee agreed that the 2001 event will be held in Connecticut. CTDEP agreed to take the lead in identifying potential Connecticut sites for the summit meeting. Allen Berrien, as a member of the board of directors of the Bridgeport Regional Vocational Aquaculture School, and on behalf of John Curtis, the Director of the school, offered the school as a potential site for the meeting. Mark Tedesco thanked Mr. Berrien, and noted that he will pass the offer on to CTDEP for their consideration. The agreement team has prepared a draft agreement, which is currently being reviewed internally by the agencies, after which it would go into Executive review by the Governors' offices. The agreement is structured similar to the six principal CCMP problem areas, with the exception of the Long Island Sound Reserve, which is included as a separate section for presentation purposes. There will be a presentation of the draft agreement at the July 19 management committee meeting.

BEACH ACT of 2000

Mark Tedesco introduced Helen Grebe of EPA Region II's Environmental Laboratory in Edison, New Jersey. Helen is an environmental scientist who is part of EPA's water quality monitoring/sampling program that is conducted from EPA's helicopter. Grebe presented an overview of the requirements of the *Beaches Environmental and Coastal Health Act of 2000* (see Attachment 10) and answered several questions from members on the Act.

UPDATES

LIS Lobster Steering Committee – The committee has completed its review of proposals; an announcement of awards and projects is expected in July for the \$3.5 million in research grants through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. A second lobster

symposium is planned for later this year to follow up on the April 2000 session. The NY and CT Sea Grant programs have the lead on planning the symposium. For lobster information, contact Nancy Balcom, CT Sea Grant Extension at 860 405-9701 or nancy.balcom@uconn.edu; or Antoinette Clemetson, New York Sea Grant Extension at 631 727-3910 or aoc5@cornell.edu; the lobster website address is: www.seagrantsunysb.edu/lilobsters/lilobsters.htm.

System-wide Eutrophication Model (SWEM) – Mark Tedesco provided a brief summary of the work of the system-wide nutrients work group in reviewing SWEM in detail over the past 18 months, including formation of an independent Model Evaluation Group. As a result of that review, a recommendation has been made to the Management Committee to accept SWEM as a more advanced model than LIS 3.0 and to use it as a management tool for Long Island Sound in future model assessments of hypoxia.

Floor Updates – The next LISS Management Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 19, 2001 in Stamford.

Dr. Howard Weiss announced that the Thames River Watershed Partnership is hosting an on the water workshop on Friday, June 15 from 1:30-7:00 PM. The purpose of the workshop is to bring together civic leaders throughout the watershed to discuss their role in managing the watershed. Weiss indicated that this type of workshop is a good example of cooperation and communication that might be transferable to other watershed management groups.

Jennifer Wilson-Pines advised the members that Jennifer Thalhauser has been named as the new director of the Manhasset Bay Protection Committee.

Mark Tedesco reported that EPA would be sponsoring a 1½ day workshop this Fall for LIS volunteer water quality monitoring groups; more information will be forthcoming, but the workshop will be free, including meals, and will include lodging for those that need it, and reimbursement of travel expenses. If any water quality monitoring group members are interested in helping to plan the workshop, please contact Tedesco. Martin Overton reported that the Connecticut General Assembly passed the nitrogen trading legislation on the last day of the session.

SEPTEMBER CAC AGENDA TOPICS

As John Atkin had to leave the meeting early, David Miller opened the floor for members' input on the September agenda. The following topics were suggested for the Thursday, September 13, 2001 CAC meeting at the Pfizer World Headquarters building in New York City:

- 1) Welcome/roll call/introductions/housekeeping
- 2) Subcommittee reports

- Management Committee Report
- Membership Update
- Communications
- Sediment
 - EIS process
- Tracking & Monitoring
 - 2000 T&M/indicator report
 - CAC 2002 Priorities
 - WQ Monitoring DO Maps
- Watershed
- Living Marine Resources
- 3) Nitrogen Trading Program
- 4) System-Wide Eutrophication Model vs LIS 3 Model
- 5) LIS 2001 Agreement
- 6) Updates
 - NY/NJ Harbor Estuary meeting, June 14
 - IEC Beach Criteria Conference, June 15

David Miller advised the membership to provide any other suggested agenda topics to him over the next month, but cautioned that the issues already identified will take up significant time on the agenda. There being no further business brought before the CAC, Miller adjourned the meeting at 2:30 PM.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

1. June 13, 2001 CAC meeting attendance list
2. CTDEP's May 11, 2001 letter re: storm water programs
3. Commissioner Crotty's May 15, 2001 letter re: storm water programs
4. Rep. Chris Shays June 13, 2001 letter re: EPA merit award congratulations
5. CAC By Laws, Article VI
6. 2001/2002 CAC Membership List
7. CAC Tracking & Monitoring Subcommittee report
8. 2000 CCMP Tracking Report presentation slides
9. CAC Living Marine Resources Subcommittee report
10. Region II Beach Act presentation overheads
11. Commissioner Rocque's May 17, 2001 letter to EPA/ACOE